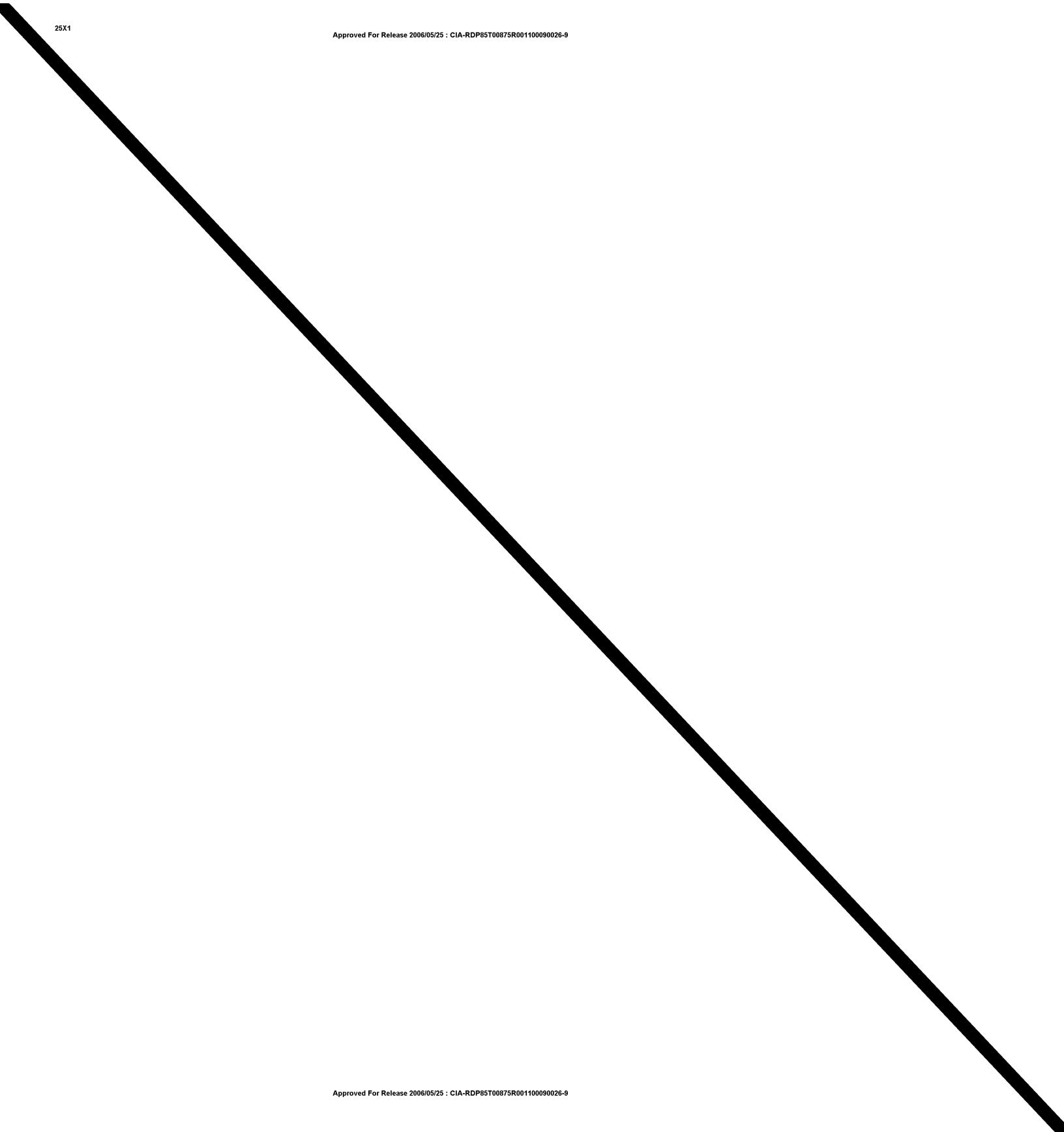

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DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

Intelligence Memorandum

COMMUNIST CHINA: ONE YEAR AFTER THE NINTH CONGRESS

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Directorate of Intelligence
1 June 1970

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

Communist China: One Year After the Ninth Congress

Introduction

The Chinese Communists' ninth party congress in April 1969 marked the end of the most tumultuous phase of the Cultural Revolution. In the ensuing year, Peking has shown itself determined to launch a more constructive phase of the "revolution" and has been largely preoccupied with searching for the elusive "internal unity" called for by the congress. Over-all, it has adopted a cautious approach to domestic issues with the result that major political upheavals have been avoided. The regime's most notable success has been in ending violent factional fighting in most areas of the country, but it has also moved forward in formulating the broad outlines of policy on such pressing issues as party reconstruction and economic development. Nevertheless, Chinese policy-making is still characterized by considerable uncertainty, and many of the social and political problems that went unresolved at the congress still persist. The fact that not a single provincial party committee has been formed in the year since China's new party constitution was adopted is ample testimony to the seemingly intractable nature of many of the difficulties confronting the regime. Thus, lingering divisions in the body politic and serious weaknesses in both national and local

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administration can be expected for some time to inhibit the effective implementation of many policies and the achievement of political stability. Moreover, political stability itself is a highly relative condition in a country whose regime still persists in trying to maintain a balance between "conservative" and "revolutionary" programs.

Leadership Unknowns

1. Part of the reason that Chinese policy-making still appears marked by uncertainties is because the ninth congress did not produce a united, cohesive leadership. It did produce a ruling politburo and its standing committee, but these bodies are composed of men and women who were on opposite sides of the political spectrum during the Cultural Revolution. Some were unquestionably bitter opponents and rivals during that period, and it seems highly likely that lingering animosities have inhibited their ability to agree on reconstruction policies. The leadership picture is further complicated by lack of knowledge about the specific responsibilities of individual leaders in key policy areas. The ninth congress, for example, failed to produce a central party secretariat, with the result that it is still not clear which politburo members are primarily involved in overseeing party building.

2. Because China's leadership is not cohesive, it is something of a misnomer to speak of "Peking's policies" or "the regime's goals." It still seems probable that within the politburo there is divergence of opinion on many issues between "radicals"--those who had clearly identified themselves with the excesses of the Cultural Revolution--and "moderates"--those who were either active in restraining the excesses or who were victims of personal denunciation by radical elements. At the time of the party congress, it appeared that no interest group within the ruling structure was strong enough to determine in advance in which direction China would move over the longer run. This may still be generally true, but the reason that it has at least been possible to speak of "regime policy" during the year since the congress is that one grouping appears to have achieved some ascendancy in certain key areas of policy-making. Thus, moderate councils appear to have prevailed in the restoration of law and order and in the cautious approach to economic and party reconstruction. Both radicals and moderates apparently agree on the indispensability of the down-to-the-countryside campaign that began in 1968, but, even here, moderate elements

seem to have led the way in mitigating some of the campaign's worst excesses. Thus, the earlier resettlement in the countryside of large numbers of minor officials--which resulted in almost denuding the staffs of many urban organizations--has been replaced in many areas by a rotational system that allows at least one third of a staff to remain in place.

3. There is very little known about the manner in which policy decisions are made in Peking. Radicals and moderates in the leadership are not necessarily at odds over every issue, and both sides may believe that their interests can be served by a general cooling down of the Cultural Revolution. But there have been a few, albeit indirect, signs that there are differences within the leadership on such key issues as economic policy, party building, and military-civilian relations. The regime's cautious guidelines on economic development, for example, were issued piecemeal with approximately a four-month hiatus between the authoritative pronouncements on industrial and on agricultural policy. The delay in itself suggests that there may have been continuing debate in high councils. A basic dichotomy exists between those who favor economic programs that stress the virtues of political revolutionary fervor and those who emphasize organization, rationality, and technical competence. Thus, in public discussions arguments for concentrating on production and improving management practices are juxtaposed with those stressing the need to put politics in command of production practices and to allow inexperienced workers to participate in decision-making.

4. Another sign of division within high councils is the implicit criticism of various policies having nothing to do with culture contained in cultural polemics over the past year. This is a continuation of the arcane and indirect cultural criticism that was a weapon that Chinese politicians used against each other during the Cultural Revolution. Many, if not all, of the cultural polemics waged this year appear to have been employed to express the discontent of members of the radical group in the leadership. In January, for example, People's

Daily published a lengthy literary criticism that implicitly condemned the regime's cautious approach to economic development and the policy of reinstating large numbers of veteran officials in the party apparatus. The author of the article has been identified as a former member of the cultural revolution group in Shanghai and hence a spokesman for the radical point of view. The continuing appearance of such articles strongly suggests that the advocates of more extreme solutions to China's problems are restless. It is difficult to determine whether these polemics mean that the radicals' arguments are backed by Mao himself or whether they simply indicate an absence of other means of expressing their views.

The Restoration of Order

5. The efforts to achieve stability over the past year did not take hold until some months after the ninth congress. The immediate aftermath of the congress in fact witnessed another sharp upswing in factional violence in a number of localities. For the most part, this turmoil appeared to be precipitated by former Red Guard factionalists who continued to be dissatisfied with their positions in local power structures and who were quarreling over personnel assignments in the reconstruction of grassroot party organizations. During the Cultural Revolution such politically inspired violence had often been difficult to curb because the perpetrators had been protected by persons in authority in the provincial administrations or in Peking itself, or in both. By mid-summer 1969, however, the situation in at least one province had become so anarchic that the central authorities felt compelled to issue a tough directive empowering the People's Liberation Army (PLA) to use "military tactics" against the troublemakers. Subsequently, that directive was given nationwide application and was backed up by another tough order in August calling for an end to violence in order to facilitate the regime's "war preparations."

6. The increased willingness of the central authorities to authorize the army to impose order

by the threat or use of force where necessary has been the most important factor leading to the marked reduction in serious disorders in China since the summer of 1969. There is probably still divergence in Peking over which local factionalists to support, but a combination of external pressures and internal imperatives seems to have produced a greater degree of unanimity in Peking on opposing domestic violence. The sharp deterioration in relations with the Soviet Union over the past year has resulted in an urgent need to avoid major internal upheavals and to demonstrate visibly China's national unity. An equally important factor is the regime's desire to create an atmosphere conducive to revitalizing the economy and to restore central control over the country after three years of unprecedented domestic crisis.

The Policies of Reconstruction

7. Although there has generally been a paucity of detailed public announcements on regime programs since the ninth congress, Peking has succeeded in establishing the broad outlines of a number of future policies, particularly in the economic and social spheres. There is a growing body of evidence, for example, that both local and national authorities are giving increased attention to economic planning, and it appears that data are currently being collected for a new five-year plan. The thrust of most authoritative discussions of the economy over the past year has been the need for reinstituting central direction and management over the economy, although lower levels of administration will still be permitted a degree of flexibility in meeting their plan requirements.

8. Peking has made it clear that a major goal of future economic plans will continue to be the development of small and medium-sized industries in rural areas, primarily to support agriculture. The regime's over-all purpose is to establish a series of "relatively independent but varied" provincial industrial systems. Most of the capital investment in these systems is to be provided by the localities themselves; the state will reserve the bulk of its resources for investment in certain strategically

important industries and in the development of modern weapons. This policy involves considerable delegation of new responsibilities to the rural communes and production brigades, which will be charged with the administration not only of local commerce and agricultural mechanization facilities but also of medical services and education.

9. Since the ninth congress, official attitudes toward change in the economic sphere have been generally cautious, and the central authorities appear to have become preoccupied with the need to achieve a satisfactory level of agricultural production--particularly of grain--and a maximum of industrial output. The regime's determination to avoid past mistakes is evidenced by its quiet abandonment of some of the disruptive rural experiments that were attempted before the party congress. These included efforts to reduce further the material incentives to peasants by confiscating their private plots and also institutional changes aimed at enlarging the size of agricultural collectives. While Mao probably retains his ideological commitment to such goals as achieving greater collectivization in agriculture and promoting more egalitarianism in both rural and industrial income, the regime's current position at least suggests that extreme reforms will not be imposed on the economy until it has been sufficiently strengthened to absorb additional strains.

10. In the social sphere, it has become progressively clearer that the "down-to-the-countryside" movement--the systematic reduction of the urban population initiated in late 1968--has become a permanent campaign. Although there had been similar movements since 1957, the current campaign is definitely broader in scope and seems primarily intended as a comprehensive attempt to raise the low technological level of China's agricultural production while reducing the enormous population pressures in the cities. Thus far, the program, which involves the rotation or permanent resettlement of millions of students, technicians, teachers, medical personnel, and minor officials, has been implemented in a deliberate and largely orderly fashion. In fact, the demonstrated ability to shift such large numbers of

people to rural areas is an impressive measure of the high degree of confidence and effectiveness with which the governing bodies below the national level are now able to implement some major regime programs. Nevertheless, it should be kept in mind that the broader utopian goal of the program--the creation of a more egalitarian society--makes many aspects of the campaign inherently unstable and potentially susceptible to radical influence of the type that marked the Great Leap Forward.

11. In addition to the down-to-the-countryside movement, Peking has shown every intention over the past year of pursuing two other of Mao's pet social reforms that were initiated well before the ninth congress. These are the introduction of a cooperative rural medical service and reform of the educational system from the primary to the university level. Medical reforms in the countryside involve the permanent transfer of large numbers of physicians and public health personnel from urban to rural areas, the training of local, semiskilled "barefoot doctors", and the formation of a medical care system to be financed by contributions from the peasants in the brigades and communes. Even though the program has seriously depleted urban health facilities and has led to financial deficits in some rural units, it appears to have taken hold as a fixture of the regime's public health policy. The program has probably brought at least rudimentary medical aid to millions of China's peasants for the first time.

12. In education, Peking has outlined a broad policy of reform, but implementation has been relatively slow over the past year. Primary and middle schools have been in operation, but the scope of their activities, and to some extent their curricula, appears to vary from area to area. There is no sign that China's colleges and universities--with the possible exception of a few technical schools--have reopened after a three-and-a-half year hiatus. Peking still appears committed to the goal of shortening the length of schooling at all levels and revamping the academic curriculum

in favor of even more political and vocational training. Propaganda discussions of education over the past year suggest that reform is in process in at least a large number of model primary and middle schools set up in various provinces. Moreover, the delay in reopening the universities may be in part because many of them, including Peking University, are currently shifting some part of their facilities to the countryside or to urban factory districts, where they presumably will be in a better position to introduce more practical training into the curricula.

Central Administrative Reorganization

13. The future course of the various social and economic policies that Peking is pursuing will probably be considerably affected by the kind of people the regime places in the reconstituted central government organs and the Chinese Communist party apparatus at all levels. The ninth party congress elected a new politburo and central committee, although it failed to form a party secretariat and a central control (i.e. disciplinary) commission. It is possible that some essential elements of the central party structure may have been reconstituted behind the scenes and could now be operating. There is, however, little firm evidence for this beyond a few propaganda references to units such as the central committee department for united front work and a reference in late March 1970 to the "General Office of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee," the first official mention in about three years of this highly strategic component that formerly served as the executive office of the party secretariat. A major question remains as to whether some lesser central party units or the secretariat itself will ever be reconstituted in their previous forms. Unlike the old constitution, the new one promulgated at the ninth congress failed to mention a secretariat and merely announced that an unspecified number of "compact and efficient" organs would be set up to attend to the daily affairs of the party, government, and army.

14. The passion for administrative simplicity reflected in the party constitution has also affected the central governing bodies that at present appear to be in the throes of reorganization. Several high officials have said that the 39 ministries under the State Council (excluding the Ministry of National Defense) will be streamlined, and some amalgamations have been reported over the past year. The process has been slow, however, and no new civilian ministers have been named--a move that presumably would signal the completion of government reorganization.

15. Although central government ministries apparently continue to function under the over-all aegis of Military Control Committees, there are signs that civilian authorities may be playing a significant role in at least those agencies responsible for economic planning. The fact that provincial and national media have been referring to preparations for a unified national plan suggests that some experienced planners, almost all of whom were criticized during the Cultural Revolution, may have been called back into action.

Party Reconstruction in the Provinces

16. Considerable information has become available on the status of party rebuilding at the lower levels, and the process, although still slow, has shown signs of intensifying in recent months. Party reconstruction did not receive much publicity in the immediate aftermath of the ninth congress and seems to have made little headway until the announcement that a party committee was formed in a Shanghai cotton mill in mid-June 1969. Since that time it has become clear that party building has become Peking's major political campaign, and the amount of publicity devoted to preparations for party reorganization and to the activities of newly formed party committees at the county level and below has magnified considerably.

17. Despite these indications of progress, party rebuilding at the lower levels has been a torcuous, agonizing process, and it is likely to remain

so in the foreseeable future. The reasons for the delays encountered to date are at least twofold. In part the process has been slow because Peking has evidently prescribed that local party organizations must be reconstructed from the grass roots upward. In practice this means that in the countryside, for example, party committees must first be formed at the production brigade level, then at the commune level, and only then at the county level and so forth. Perhaps even more important, delay is inevitable because Peking has required that the various party committees be composed of representatives from the ranks of the military, veteran officials, and Cultural Revolution activists who are currently holding positions in local governing bodies. In many, if not nearly all localities, these elements are mutually antagonistic. Revolutionary activists, for example, do not welcome the prospect of having to work with veteran officials whom they criticized during the Cultural Revolution.* The result of having to inject both old and new civilian and military blood into the party committees is that there is often considerable delay while the various components haggle over personnel assignments. The whole process is fraught with political difficulties, and it seems highly unlikely that the final composition of any party committee satisfies all the participants. There is ample evidence that in a number of areas where party committees have been formed, their authority has been challenged by disgruntled local officials who have been left out of the party.

18. Peking is fully aware of these difficulties and publicly announced last July that it expects party building to be "gradual." Since then, however, the regime has indicated that it is anxious to speed up the tempo of reconstruction and has taken

**As used in this paper, the term "veteran officials" applies only to those former party and government cadre who were victimized by radical Red Guard factionalists during the Cultural Revolution. There are other veteran officials, of course, who sided with and were supported by the militant Red Guard.*

some steps to overcome problems that have been hindering the process. Thus, it has put into much sharper focus the provision made by the party constitution for the relationship to be maintained between the party committees and the revolutionary committees--the governing organs established in each administrative unit during the Cultural Revolution. According to several authoritative pronouncements, party committees are to "lead" all organs of government at every level, and the present revolutionary committees are to serve as the executive agencies of the party bodies. This formulation raises the interesting, and as yet unanswered, question of whether or not the party will eventually establish its own command control apparatus. Peking, however, has taken great pains to clarify its intention to have the party resume the leading role in administration.

19. Since the ninth party congress, Peking has also moved to overcome a major stumbling block in the area of party personnel assignments--the persistence of factional quarreling between veteran officials and Cultural Revolution activists. This problem has been endemic in most revolutionary committees, and in the first months following the ninth congress, Peking cautiously appealed to both groups to "unify their thinking" on party building. Last fall, however, the regime began forcefully to reiterate its intention of reinstating many veteran officials--whose expertise is badly needed in the work of reconstruction--and it has taken a progressively tougher line against the activists opposing them. In essence, Peking has signaled local authorities that former members of Red Guard factions cannot expect to win places in the party simply on their merits as revolutionary militants; thus, if they refuse to toe the line, they are to be excluded from the party and even from some of the posts they have held on revolutionary committees. There is evidence, [redacted] 25X1 that local authorities in some areas have responded with alacrity to Peking's lead and have shipped off large numbers of activist cadres to labor in the countryside. At this point, the regime appears

intent on maintaining its tough stance vis-a-vis the activists, although Peking's guidelines on how to handle them are alone not likely to overcome serious factional quarreling in many committees. Still, the chances of forming viable party committees in many localities may be improved. The regime is now placing much more stress on the importance of organizational discipline within the party and seems far less reluctant to alienate local militants than at the time of the ninth congress. It also appears to be more willing to back up local authorities who are trying to give short shrift to the claims of factional troublemakers to a share of power.

20. Aside from various initiatives that Peking has taken over the past year to facilitate party building, the most significant development may well be that the central authorities have given no indication the army is apparently not to be excluded from the process. Although there has been relatively little open discussion of the precise function of military men in civilian party committees, there have been ample indications that army representatives will be the linchpin holding many party committees together. To date only one provincial radio broadcast has specifically identified army personnel serving in responsible positions on civilian (in this case, factory) party committees. There have been numerous references in propaganda, however, to the critical role played by PLA "support-the-left" personnel in resolving problems that have cropped up within party committees and between party and revolutionary committees. The tenor of this propaganda suggests that the military are more than disinterested observers and, in fact, probably concurrently hold party and revolutionary committee posts. If this is true at the lower levels, it seems highly likely that important military leaders are playing a key role in the so-called "party core leading groups" that exist at the provincial level. Presumably these same men will be members of the provincial party committees when they are formed.

Problems, Problems, Problems

21. The continuing importance of the army in the party building process serves to remind that Peking still has far to go before it can restore any political system resembling the tight-knit civilian government and party structure existing before the Cultural Revolution. Meanwhile, the army--because of its power and discipline--remains the primary instrument of political and administrative control in the country. The regime's efforts to get on with party building, as well as signs over the past year that the military are attempting to disengage from some basic-level civilian operations, raise large questions about the army's future political role. Nevertheless, it seems improbable that military leaders will entirely abdicate the political power and influence they have acquired in many administrative organs at the provincial level and even below.

22. The presence of the army in politics, however, has not solved all the social and administrative dilemmas that are inhibiting the restitution of political stability. Thus, although the provincial revolutionary committees have been demonstrating an ability to govern, many, if not all, are still, in some respects, beset by factionalism and intense political infighting. There is no reason to believe that the military representatives on these committees are above the fray. The situation may be even further complicated in some areas because the local military itself lacks cohesion. Since the summer of 1969, Peking has attempted to deal with factional rivalries in a few long-troubled provinces by initiating changes in the top leadership, but the central authorities still appear to lack either the willingness or the ability to curb the behind-the-scenes political quarreling and jockeying for position that mars the performance of many provincial governments.

23. Below the provincial level it is apparent that the regime is still wrestling with the problem of creating effective organized leadership. This dilemma has been illustrated in recent months by

numerous complaints in local media that minor civilian officials are "afraid" to exercise their authority and are dragging their feet in implementing a variety of important programs. The trouble newly formed party committees are apparently having in asserting their authority over revolutionary committees in many areas is also symptomatic of the continuing weaknesses in local administration. The party building process itself--which involves a whole panoply of personnel investigations and political criticism sessions--has intensified existing antagonisms among local leaders and has often interfered with the performance of administrative duties.

24. The weaknesses of local administration are often compounded by low morale, resentment, and some indiscipline among the general population. The twists and turns of the Cultural Revolution, along with the tensions accompanying Peking's reconstruction efforts, have reportedly engendered widespread public apathy and disillusionment. The breakdowns in regime control during the Cultural Revolution, for example, have apparently surfaced considerable popular distrust of the system and of authority in general. In an attempt to restore authority, various programs have been introduced that have had the effect of exacerbating popular discontent. Thus, peasants who over the past three years managed to increase their private consumption because of lapses in economic controls are now resentful of more exacting state grain collections. Many urban dwellers sent to the countryside have had their working and family lives traumatically disrupted and are apprehensive about the future. The regime's efforts to streamline government organizations have also produced serious morale problems among minor officials sent to work in rural communes and brigades.

25. Broadly speaking, the Chinese Communist Government has traditionally tried to achieve its domestic goals through various socioeconomic and political campaigns involving both persuasion and coercion. Despite the deceleration of the Cultural Revolution and a cautious approach on many internal

issues, there has been no let-up in regime campaigns and, consequently, in the high level of social tension that is their by-product. The down-to-the-countryside movement is an outstanding example of a tension-producing campaign, but there are others. In party building, for instance, all localities are in the midst of sweeping "class purification" and "struggle-criticism-transformation" movements. These campaigns generate considerable popular anxiety because the future position of many people not only in the party but also in society in general depends on their ability to come through with a clean slate. The regime's year-old "war preparations" campaign--designed to induce a siege mentality in the country--has demanded additional popular sacrifices and renewed demonstrations of "revolutionary enthusiasm." The recent anticorruption campaign, although directed in large part at extremist factional troublemakers, also cracks down on general social indiscipline with the result that a broad range of people apparently fears imprisonment or even execution.

26. Thus the regime's methods of operation place enormous pressures on the population and probably have the unintended side effect of inhibiting the ability of the local authorities to implement effectively various aspects of Peking's programs. The disaffection created by continually buffeting the populace by one campaign after another is probably compounded by the regime's persistence in trying to maintain a semblance of balance between "conservative" and "revolutionary" policies. In the economic sphere, for example, Peking has acknowledged the necessity of maintaining material incentives for the peasantry by abandoning its experiment of reducing individual earnings by confiscating private plots. But other plans for enhancing individual incomes have been roundly condemned in the current anticorruption campaign, steps have been taken to collectivize handicraft and service occupations, and conversion from cash to workpoint compensation has been carried out for a number of nonfarm jobs. Therefore, Peking's efforts to balance "pragmatic" measures with programs that conform to the Maoist ideological imperatives to transform the peasantry

into selfless, egalitarian "new men" create something of a "credibility gap" and erode popular willingness to respond to government programs.

27. Because Peking still faces substantially the same problems confronting it at the time of the ninth congress, the degree to which stable conditions have been restored to date is highly relative. The violent turmoil and disruption of the Cultural Revolution have receded, but persistent political divisions and passive popular resistance make it difficult to set standards for, or estimate the timetable of, a return to political "normality" in China. The general outline and broad direction of a number of Peking's policies seem clearer than they did a year ago, but there are still substantial gaps in the government's ability to formulate programs and to oversee their successful execution.

Mao Enigma

28. Any assessment of the decision-making process among China's top leadership is complicated by lack of knowledge of the role played in the process by Mao Tse-tung. His public appearances are largely confined to major holidays, and, although "instructions" are still issued in his name, their number has declined markedly since the summer of 1969. Presumably, he still approves major policy decisions, but the degree to which he initiates policy or, conversely, merely acquiesces to pressures from other leaders remains unclear.

29. The process of party building provides a prime example of the difficulty involved in assessing Mao's leadership. As early as 1967 Mao made clear his willingness to resurrect the party as a political instrument. He also spelled out his intention to staff it primarily with former officials, who were to be purified in the fires of the Cultural Revolution, along with a selective infusion of "new blood" from the ranks of revolutionary activists. Thus, on the surface it appears that party reconstruction is presently proceeding according to the Maoist scenario.

30. But having gone to such lengths to decimate the old party apparatus, which he considered overly bureaucratic and unresponsive to his will, is it safe to assume that Mao will be satisfied with the new structure? The revolutionary committees, which are slated to be the party's executive arm, have already spawned a proliferation of departments and staffs, suggesting that the new party-revolutionary committee structure may be as stifling a bureaucracy as the old interlocking party-government directorates. Former party cadres have been badly shaken by their experiences in the Cultural Revolution, but can Mao be sure they will now be more responsive to his wishes? Although revolutionary activists are being co-opted into the party, it is apparent that a campaign is currently under way to exclude many who are regarded by conservative local authorities as potential troublemakers. Mao himself probably recognizes that any party needs experienced administrators, and he may have concluded that the former Red Guards have played their part and can now be cast aside. Still, the current denigration of their role raises the legitimate question as to whether Mao will find that the "new" party is as "purified" as he would like. It is possible, of course, that to ensure his dominance over the party organization, Mao intends the present party building process will eventually result in an unstable coalition of competing party and nonparty groups--such as the mass organizations composed of former Red Guards--making up the power structure. Nevertheless, there have been indications in propaganda media in recent weeks that strong arguments are being put forward that the party must be in a "leading" role, never a "parallel" one vis-a-vis other organizations. Thus it would appear that there is a strong possibility that the party is on the way to becoming once again an assured elite. It might even become the same kind of elite as the old party that Mao accused of being divorced from the Chinese people and manipulated by leaders who failed to share his populist vision of the transformation of Chinese society.

31. Even though the Maoist vision has often been out of accord with reality, it has set the

direction of Chinese politics in the past and may still be doing so. At present China is in the throes of massive political, social, and economic reconstruction, and apparently some of the nation's leaders are trying to modify the Maoist goals enough to gain a period of internal peace and to rationalize some of the country's political processes. To what extent Mao shares these goals is difficult to determine. Barring any major physical disability, he may merely be biding his time until he judges that conditions are again stable enough for renewed forward momentum in his drive to revive revolutionary enthusiasm. His more radical followers, who enjoyed their greatest power during the most turbulent periods of the Cultural Revolution, may be less patient and may fear that the restoration of stability will further erode their positions.

32. Meanwhile, moderate voices appear to be dominant in regime councils. The present situation finds Peking making some efforts to back up the ninth congress' claim that "victory and unity has been achieved." Unfortunately, however, the political ground rules remain complex and confusing. Various groups in Chinese society at both the national and local levels are still scrambling for tenable political and social positions, which suggests that the process of stabilization will take a long time to unfold.